

TO: Representative Ruth Fisher, Co-Chair, House Transportation Committee
Representative Maryann Mitchell, Co-Chair, House Transportation Committee
Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, Chairman, Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Don Benton, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Transportation Committee

FROM: Senator Dan Swecker

SUBJECT: Legislative Report - Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee

DATE: September, 2001

First TPEAC Meeting

The Transportation Permit Efficiency and Accountability Committee (TPEAC) held its first meeting on September 12, 2001 at the West Coast Olympia hotel. Minutes of the meeting are attached to this report.

Present at the meeting were all of the voting members of the committee named in the legislation, and five of the eight non-voting members. Representatives from five of the six “invited” stakeholder groups were also in attendance. Senator Dan Swecker was appointed as the chair of the committee.

The first meeting’s agenda included discussion of the committee’s objectives, rules of interaction (bylaws) and dispute resolution process. An overview of ESB 6188 was presented to orient committee members to specifics of the legislation. At this first meeting, the five non-legislative voting members (WA Department of Ecology, WSDOT, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Association of Washington Cities, and Washington State Association of Counties) presented their perspectives and critical success factors for the permit streamlining effort.

Five subcommittees were created to address specific aspects of environmental permit streamlining. They are as follows:

- Programmatic permit process
- One-stop permitting
- Watershed-based approach to environmental mitigation
- Pilot projects
- Training, compliance, and reporting

Organizational leads were appointed for each of these subcommittees, and each subcommittee will have its first meeting before the next TPEAC meeting, which is scheduled for October 10. Future TPEAC meetings are scheduled for the 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Detailed Work Plan

WSDOT has developed several iterations of a detailed work plan for implementation of environmental permit streamlining. WSDOT staff identified detailed tasks within five tracks of the Act: programmatic process; one-stop permitting; watershed-based mitigation; pilot projects; training, compliance, and reporting. Summary and detailed versions of Gantt workload charts were developed for work planning purposes. The detailed work plan includes specific tasks, resources, precedence, and “early win” activities within each of the five tracks. These tasks will be directed by the five subcommittees discussed above.

Permit Process Baseline Analysis

WSDOT staff have identified the current transportation permit process, including major steps in environmental documentation, planning, design, and interaction with resource agencies. The current process will be used as a baseline for identifying potential improvements to the permitting process and applications for specific permit streamlining tools such as programmatic permits, one-stop permitting, and watershed-based environmental mitigation.

Stakeholder Communication Plan

A comprehensive stakeholder communications plan is proposed. An Environmental Permit Streamlining color brochure has been developed for dissemination to agencies, stakeholders and the public. WSDOT’s Environmental Affairs Office maintains a web page dedicated to Environmental Permit Streamlining. It is proposed that the web page be updated periodically to display dynamic, updated content and to lead readers to current information quickly. A separate web-site for TPEAC members is also proposed. This web-site will allow committee and subcommittee members to review working materials and interact electronically. The continuously updated content of this web-site will include a calendar, document library, and email tracking capabilities. Other components of the communications plan will include publication of TPEAC and subcommittee agendas and minutes, periodic findings and summary reports, and public education and involvement materials.

Future TPEAC Meeting Dates

The following dates have been scheduled for future TPEAC meetings:

- Wednesday, October 10, 2001
- Wednesday, November 14, 2001
- Wednesday, December 12, 2001
- Wednesday, January 9, 2002
- Wednesday, February 13, 2002
- Wednesday, March 20, 2002
- Wednesday, April 10, 2002
- Wednesday, May 8, 2002
- Wednesday, June 12, 2002
- Wednesday, July 10, 2002
- Wednesday, August 14, 2002
- Wednesday, September 11, 2002